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To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I believe this is where I can comment upon the legal settlement of the anti-trust case between the DOJ and Microsoft.

My comment is this:

Given the extent to which Microsoft has behaved unlawfully, is the "punishment" really in proportion to the degree of law-breaking? Of course not. Will the settlement prevent Microsoft from gaining entry into other markets by exerting its monopoly of the operating system market? Of course not. By bundling extra "freebies" (although the price of its OS has jumped significantly) into its operating system it can enter any software market it sees fit, and still "massage" its operating system into running its own software better.

In my opinion, the only remedy is to create "Chinese walls" between the operating system kernel, the browser+windowing system, and the applications. This effectively creates 3 sub-companies within Microsoft, but avoids the embarrassment for Microsoft of being "split up". All technical and strategic communication between those three groups must be in the public domain, giving software companies a level playing field to develop software and components for the operating system. Monitors must be put in place with access to every communication between the groups, and judge the relevance of these communications to third parties.

My other opinion is this: I don't think the American legal system is up to the job of dealing justice to Microsoft, especially since there seems to be some "lobbying" to Capitol Hill. I don't think international opinion of the American justice system is particularly high.

Calum

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